

# IGLOO LIFE





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LOOKING FOR  
THE CARIBOU HERD



# I G L O O L I F E

*A brief account of a primitive Arctic tribe  
living near one of the most northern  
trading posts of Revillon Frères*

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BY REVILLON FRÈRES

T W O H U N D R E D  
Y E A R S A G O

*I*N the year 1723 there was founded in Paris the small fur business which has since developed into the firm of Revillon Frères. To mark the completion of two centuries of continued activity and development we are sending our friends this book.



“Igloo Life” deals with but a single phase of our work. It is a record of the primitive life of those Eskimo tribes living along the shores of Hudson Bay, where Revillon post traders, sometimes hundreds of miles apart, are stationed for collecting the valuable peltry of the region. Revillon executives and inspectors staying in these remote posts for months at a time have had unusual advantages for ethnological study, and have recorded with pen and camera the life of the Eskimo in the barren wilderness of the Arctic.



*The story of fur trapping along the great rivers of the Northwest, the collection of sables in Siberia,*

*the bazars of the East where Persians and broadtail are distributed to all quarters of the world—these all have their interest and their place in the history of the house when it is written. Meanwhile we hope you will enjoy the story of our lovable Eskimo friends.*



ENJOYING THE ARCTIC SUNSHINE. TO PREVENT FROST-BITE THIS ESKIMO WOMAN DIGS A HOLE IN THE SNOW FOR HER FEET

## THE ESKIMO FAMILY AT HOME

LEAGUES and leagues beyond the last tree large enough to afford building material, where icy Arctic gales sweep over the frozen earth for three fourths of the year, the Eskimo preserves his primitive civilization from generation to generation largely through his skill in building his snow house, the igloo.

Every Eskimo family has a summer home and a winter home. Neither of these can be permanent as the scarcity of food in the North means constant and laborious migrations. In summer a tent of skins, which can be carried from place to place, affords shelter enough but when the freezing weather comes—and it comes early in the North—the Eskimo must have a dwelling which can not be blown over or penetrated by searching wind. It must be built quickly in some place where there is a likelihood of obtaining food, so the Eskimo father takes his snow knife and starts an igloo.

His skill at this work is amazing. A row of snow blocks is set in a true circle and other rows are added until there is a beehive-shaped structure on the architectural lines of a dome. The snow blocks

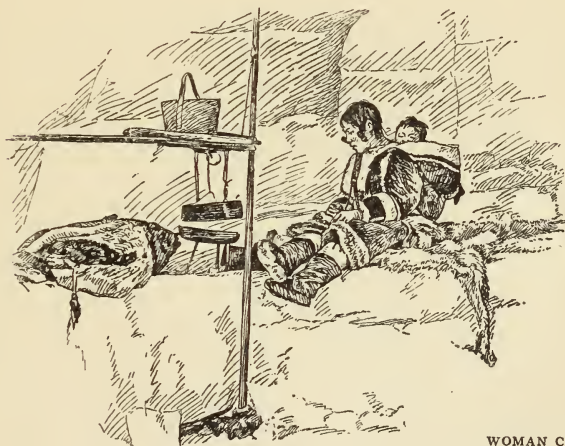
ESKIMO BUILDER  
STARTING AN IGLOO

which are soft when cut, freeze together until in a few hours the igloo roof will bear the weight of several persons. About the only thing which will crush it in is a wandering polar bear. An old man and old woman living near the Revillon Post at Cape Dufferin were awakened one night by a polar bear which had broken their roof and thrust his head through the hole only a few feet from their faces. The old woman took the dip used to trim her lamp and held the bear at bay until the old man had hobbled out, secured his harpoon and killed the bear outside the igloo.

The only heat in an igloo is from the lamp which burns seal oil or whale oil with a wick of dried moss. This lamp smokes villainously unless it is tended with great skill. No one ever learns how to manage the native lamp except the Eskimo woman. Care

must be taken that the igloo does not get too warm or the walls will begin to drip. The art is to keep the temperature barely below the freezing point. If the Eskimo wife finds her walls getting damp and cannot control the heat otherwise, she pokes a hole in the side of the igloo. When it has cooled sufficiently the hole is mended with soft snow which quickly freezes fast to the original wall. It is important to keep the inside of the igloo dry, not only for the comfort of the occupants but to prevent the fur clothing of the family getting wet. Drying it in the short sunless winter days is almost impossible.

If an Eskimo can get a few tent poles from the trader he builds a drying rack outside his igloo, where clothing may be dried out of reach of the



WOMAN COOKING  
WITH SEAL OIL LAMP



SUMMER TENT OF CARIBOU SKINS ON  
FISHING SPEARS. IT IS HELD IN PLACE  
WITH LARGE STONES

dogs, but poles are valuable when they must be brought on a long voyage. The deck load of a Revillon schooner usually contains a stack of poles which are useful for many purposes in this treeless land.

An Eskimo family accumulates few possessions on account of their constant moving from place to place to find food. In winter their goods may be loaded on a sledge drawn by the dogs, but in summer they must carry their baggage on their backs, as the dog is an indifferent pack animal. About all they can manage is the necessary equipment for hunting and fishing and indispensable clothing and utensils. The burden of the Eskimo woman has been greatly



lightened by the post trader who has brought within her reach light, strong cooking utensils which she can carry from place to place. These are much better than her home-made containers of walrus hide or the massive stone pots hewn out by her husband with a bow drill.

Igloo life in winter is enlivened by the presence of a litter or two of the carefully bred Malamute puppies which are the Eskimo's most valuable possession. While young they are gentle and lovable and make excellent playmates for the Eskimo children. After his first winter the husky dog must live outdoors, as when grown he is perpetually hungry and will not only eat up the family store of provisions but the deerhide clothing and the seal-skin boots.



FAMILY ON ROOF OF IGLOO  
SHOWING STRENGTH OF CONSTRUCTION



LISTENING TO A  
HARRY LAUDER RECORD

Every trading post in the North has a number of Eskimo families attached to it who serve the post trader in various ways. These families usually build their igloos or set up their summer tents a short distance from the post, and as they are not wholly dependent upon hunting and fishing for their food they are not so migratory as less fortunate members of their tribes. In exchange for skins they get from the post trader many of the comforts of a white man's life and even some of the luxuries. If an Eskimo is lucky he buys a phonograph. As a race they have an excellent sense of rhythm and love stirring marches and gay songs. They are particularly fond of Harry Lauder records which make them laugh immoderately. The Eskimo laughs when he hears other people laugh whether he understands the joke or not.

As the spring sun mounts higher in the sky the

igloo walls begin to drip and the family prepares to forsake the winter home which has served them so well. They load up the omiak, the large skin canoe which they use for traveling and set off for the salmon fishing. A little later they will hunt "Mimeek," the eggs of wild fowl which are very numerous in early summer. They also go after wild berries—huckleberries and cranberries—which make an agreeable change in their restricted diet. Eskimos enjoy their short summer thoroughly and are always sorry when winter comes and drives them back to the igloo again.

IGLOO LIFE



ESKIMO HUNTER  
THROWING THE HEAVY WALRUS SPEAR

## A LIVELIHOOD IN THE ARCTIC

FAMINE is never far off in the North. Hunting and fishing are notoriously uncertain and hunger is a frequent and tragic visitor to the small Eskimo tribes. They have made little progress in the art of preserving food from time of plenty to time of scarcity, and make no provision for the future. The climate, of course, enables them to keep food in winter.

The sea provides walrus and seal, the land gives bear, caribou and many smaller animals. The great good luck of an Eskimo hunter is to spear a walrus. He makes the attack from a kayak or from the edge of an ice floe. A good hunter can send the spear fully forty feet and with momentum enough to kill a walrus weighing 2,000 pounds. He cannot haul this huge carcass ashore but he anchors it as best he can with the line of his spear until he can summon help. His friends and neighbors come eagerly to his assistance, for fresh, warm walrus meat is a great delicacy. The white man never quite gets over his repulsion to the way his Eskimo friends treat freshly killed game. They tear it to pieces and consume it at once without cookery or ceremony. A walrus will

COMING BACK  
FROM THE WALRUS HUNT

provide not only a large quantity of excellent food but the hide makes a heavy, strong leather very useful for dog harness, whips, buckets and other utensils, while the tusks are valuable for spear heads or sledge runners. Eskimos usually hunt walrus in a fleet of kyaks, sharing the game if they are lucky enough to find it. Eskimos, like other primitive peoples are natural conservationists. They know nothing of sport in the white man's sense, and kill game only for meat or for the pelt.

The mainstay of a winter hunting season is the seal. As a seal is a mammal it must breathe about once in twenty minutes through a blow-hole in the ice. The hunter waits patiently over the hole with poised spear for the seal to come to the surface, but he is often disappointed as the seal is highly intel-



ligent and provides a number of breathing places. When food is scarce an Eskimo will wait for hours, even days, at a seal hole. Should the weather be very severe he builds a wind break of snow blocks, in the same way as he builds the wall of his igloo, and spreads down a deerskin to stand upon while he waits. When the seal finally rises a quick, sharp thrust of the spear ends the long siege and there is seal meat for supper, seal oil for the igloo lamp and sealskin for the pliable, beautifully-made boots worn by every member of the Eskimo family except the baby.

These are not the fur seals used for coats, but various species of hair seals found near Hudson Bay. There is the common small seal found in all Canadian waters, the Harp seal and the Hood seal. The great prize is the Square Flipper seal, a huge creature weighing about 800 pounds and yielding a quantity of food and very superior leather. The illustration shows a small seal pup born in a blizzard which has matted his coat with frosty particles but



SEAL PUP  
COATED WITH ICE

will not harm him in any other way. For about six weeks he will stay on the ice, after which he will crawl to the nearest creek and take his first swim under the instruction of his mother. At the same time he will learn to pick up his own living from the fish and shell fish which abound near land. This unusual photograph was taken near a Revillon Post in Hudson Bay.

The winter caribou is hunted for venison, which isn't particularly suitable for an Arctic diet as it is very deficient in fat, but chiefly for the skins which are warm and soft and make excellent winter clothing. Caribou skins are used with the fur either inside or outside, for trousers and for the hooded parkas. The large caribou hoods are usually edged with some longer fur like bear or fox. This is not a



HOOD WITH BEARSKIN  
BORDER TO PROTECT  
THE FACE

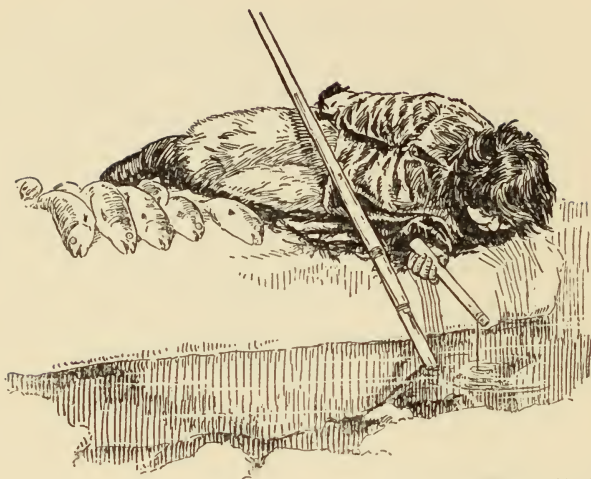




COLUMN OF FLAT STONES  
MARKING A HUNTING GROUND

trimming put on for effect, though this combination of long and short fur is a favorite with fashion designers. The Eskimo uses it to keep the sharp sleet and snow from the face of the wearer and exclude the wind from the inside of the hood.

The northern landscape is always monotonous but especially so in winter when the drifting snows make it impossible to recognize even fairly familiar locations, so the Eskimo hunter builds landmarks of



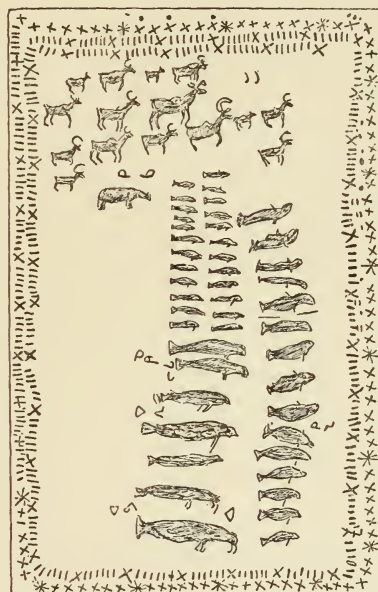
ESKIMO FISHERMAN  
JIGGING FOR SALMON

flat stones so that he can find again the spots where hunting or fishing had been unusually good.

With the coming of spring the salmon fishing provides abundant food, excellent sport and an outing for the Eskimo family. The Eskimo makes a new salmon spear which is a tripod of two prongs of ivory and one of steel lashed firmly to a staff. A seal thong six or seven feet in length is attached to retrieve the spear after it is thrown. The Eskimo uses no bait in fishing but attracts fish with two ivory jiggers which he manipulates skilfully in a rift in the ice. When the fish rushes to this lure it is killed with the spear. The fisherman builds himself a sort of nest of twigs, driftwood or anything he can find

to protect him from the ice on which he lies. Often the salmon fishing comes just in time to save whole tribes from succumbing to starvation.

The illustration shows the calendar of Kroonook, an Eskimo hunter who kept this interesting record of his year's work. The border around the edge represents the days, straight strokes for week days, crosses for Sundays. The pictures show deer of various sorts, a polar bear, walrus, readily distinguished by the tusks, and several varieties of seal and fish.



KROONOOK'S DIARY

## THE EFFICIENT ESKIMO WOMAN

THE Eskimo woman is indispensable to the economic life of the family. She does not hunt or fish if her husband is alive and well, but she skins with great skill the fur-bearing animals he captures, drying the pelts on home-made frames and dressing them to exquisite softness by her own primitive methods. She is hatter, furrier and boot maker to the entire family in addition to her duties as housewife and mother, which she performs conscientiously.

It must be admitted that she is an indifferent cook. It would be remarkable if she were anything else. Her family has no objection to raw meat or raw fish if they can get it when warm and freshly killed. This naturally discourages culinary effort. Until the trader came her utensils were very inconvenient. She could cook after a fashion in her heavy stone pots or in the water-proof vessels of walrus hide which she made for herself. By dropping a succession of hot stones into the stew it could be cooked in time but the result was not appetizing. Women who live near a post now have the enamelware pots and pans of civilization, and have learned something of the white man's cookery. They thaw



AN ESKIMO MOTHER  
AND HER CHILD



out their frozen meat and fish and have learned to use flour and beans and bacon, but in this land of frequent hunger any food is considered good and the preparation of it is of minor importance.

In making the family clothing the Eskimo woman shows great skill and a well developed decorative instinct. Her garments are well shaped and beautifully sewn and have that carefully studied fitness for their use which is characteristic of good clothes in Fifth Avenue or beyond the Arctic Circle.

The illustration shows a summer coat made from a blanket bought at the trading post. The large objects down the front which look like gigantic but-



BLANKET COAT TRIMMED  
WITH PEWTER SPOONS





DEEP COLLAR OF BEADS  
AND CARIBOU TEETH  
IN DECORATIVE DESIGN

tons are the bowls of pewter spoons from which the handles have been removed. These rap on each other as the wearer stoops or sits with a pleasant tinkling sound which is excellent style in Eskimo circles. The women of the North like pretty things to wear as well as those of friendlier climates, and they cheerfully spend many hours of labor in making some articles of personal adornment. The large collar of beads illustrated above shows something of Eskimo ability in designing. The colors are handled as effectively as by some master of decoration.

The Eskimo woman's masterpiece is the shapely sealskin boots which she makes for the entire family.



They are warm, flexible and water-proof, securely sewn with the water-tight lockstitch which Eskimo needlewomen make so well. These boots are an ideal foot covering for a land of snow and ice and are very durable when the hard wear which they receive is considered. If a thaw comes the boots get wet and harden like all leather under similar conditions. They are then thoroughly dried on the racks outside the igloo or tent, or if the family is *en tour* on poles set up on the sledge or the omiak. Their maker then re-dresses them by chewing the leather until it is flexible.

One of the duties of the Eskimo wife is to make and attach the kyak cover of walrus skin or sealskin. This is the highest test of her craftsmanship as the



ATTACHING THE COVER  
OF THE KYAK

life of her hunter may depend on the quality of her work. The skins are sewed together with the lock-stitch and then laced on firmly as shown in the illustration. When put into the water they shrink and become taut like the head of a drum.

The Eskimo woman has a voice in the family councils and if the head of the family is needed for an expedition or to perform any unusual service for a white employer, the consent of the wife should first be secured. A diplomatic negotiator will do this with gifts of trinkets or useful articles for the home.

WATER BUCKET AND DIPPER  
OF WALRUS HIDE  
SEWED WITH WATERPROOF STITCH



## FRIEND AND SERVANT—THE HUSKY DOG

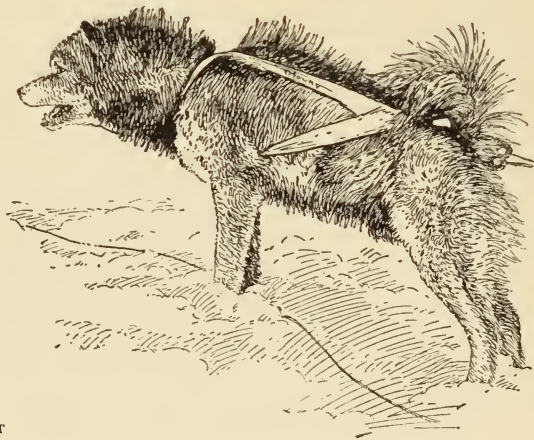
THE first playmate of an Eskimo child is the little Husky puppy, and as long as he lives the Malamute dog will be at the door of his igloo or his tent sharing his plenty or his poverty as the case may be. An Eskimo family is never without dogs unless the entire team has been swept away by one of the dreaded epidemics which attack them from time to time. When this happens the Eskimo starts to replace his loss as soon as he can possibly afford it.

Eskimo dogs are valuable, a good puppy bringing as much in this meagre land as a similarly well-bred young dog will cost at a metropolitan dog show. A good sledge dog costs from \$60 to \$100 which brings the price of a matched team to a very considerable figure. In the North, as elsewhere, certain individuals and certain trading posts have better luck in breeding dogs than others, so constant exchange is going on. An Eskimo will trade a fine rifle or a valuable bundle of skins for a dog he fancies, and the schooners which ply from post to post around Hudson and James's Bay usually have a dog pen filled with canine travellers on their way to a new home.

A sledge dog loves his work and is always eager

to be off. The team howls and snarls as they draw their heavy loads, but if in good condition they are unwilling to rest until it is actually necessary. Eskimo drivers are usually kind to their dogs and rarely beat a tired animal though fighting or laziness is severely punished. When the dreaded soft snow comes in the North a driver will sometimes walk ahead of his team breaking a trail so that they can draw their load more easily. At the end of a hard day the face of a sledge dog will be covered with a mask of ice formed by his freezing breath.

Every dog team has its leader, a wise old fellow who pulls at the end of his trace, thirty feet or longer, and keeps the rest of the team in order with a rough and ready discipline. He must be the physical master of the team able to enforce his authority in



KEEPING  
THE TRACES TAUT



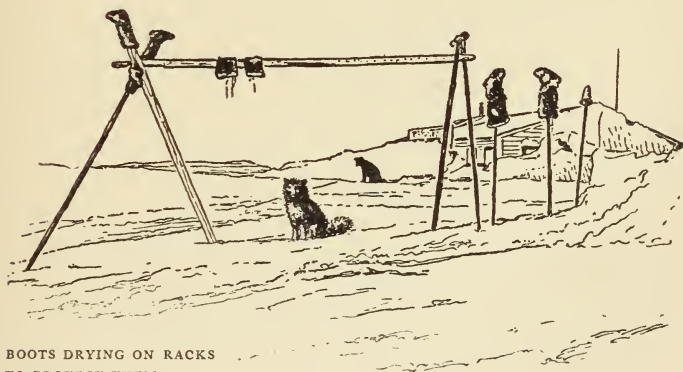
THE RULER  
OF THE TEAM



the quick, sharp fights which occur constantly. A well-bred sledge dog will respond to his driver's call which sounds like "Hu'it, hu'it" until he is exhausted. At the resting signal he will throw himself on the snow and relax completely until the word comes to go on.

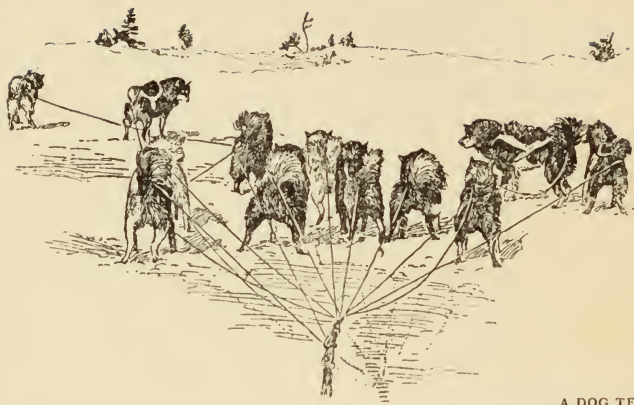
At the post kennel the breaking in of a sledge dog begins when he is about half grown, but the Eskimo boys start much earlier, harnessing tiny puppies to their toy sleds and teaching them to pull the light burden. The puppy resists vigorously but soon learns that this is his destined task, and by the time he is strong enough to take his place in the dog team he knows his work pretty well.

An Eskimo dog will eat anything, including his own harness if his master is so careless as to leave it within reach. Omnivorous dog teams account for



BOOTS DRYING ON RACKS  
TO PROTECT THEM  
FROM THE DOGS





A DOG TEAM  
HARNESSED FANWISE

many familiar sights in the North. In winter the kyak is stored on a high pedestal of ice or the dogs would eat the leather cover. Boots and clothing are dried on racks of poles or spears to keep them out of the way of hungry snapping jaws. When food is plentiful the team is fed once a day, preferably on seal meat which keeps them in good condition. Another excellent food is dried fish caught in quantities in the autumn and cured for winter feeding. Dogs do not thrive on caribou meat as the venison of the barren country is lacking in fat necessary to proper nutrition in cold climates. The Eskimo does not feed his dog in summertime allowing him to hunt for his own living, but at the posts the dogs are fed the year round.

Below the timber line where trails are narrow,



sledge dogs are harnessed in single file, usually four to the team. In the trackless open spaces further North the dogs are harnessed fan-wise which gives more power and better control to the driver but it necessitates stopping every few hours to untangle the traces which have become snarled through interweaving of the dogs. The leader dog on the longest trace is often a long way from the driver.

A dog sledge must be packed for safety in any position possible as it is sure to be turned over at least once a day and probably once every few hours. The guides are very skilful in preparing freight for a trip over the ice and it is not often that anything packed by an experienced guide is damaged. If a load collides with a boulder or ice cake and the master trace is broken the dogs keep right on running for a mile or two in the open country. The Eskimo driver does not pursue them, which he knows would be useless, but lures them back by craft. One method which is sometimes successful is to lie flat on the ice and imitate with the arms the flipper movements of a seal. The dogs come running back to investigate and are caught and re-harnessed.

Heavy snow which makes transportation so difficult in a country of railways and highways is eagerly welcomed in the North where the dog sledge is the only means of winter transportation. Distances which would be impossible on foot are readily covered with the dog team and the sledge on the hard-crusted snow or ice.



MALAMUTE PUPPIES  
INSEPARABLE COMPANIONS  
OF AN ESKIMO CHILD

## H A P P Y L I T T L E E S K I M O S

AN Eskimo mother makes no baby clothes. The nude child lives in the great fur hood of the mother's deerskin coat in direct contact with her body until he is able to run about. Eskimo children are very beautiful. They are exquisitely formed and have a doll-like regularity of feature strongly Mongolian in type. Their hands and feet are small and shapely like those of the Japanese, and the Eskimo woman retains these shapely hands throughout life though she subjects them to the hardest labor.

Eskimo babies are nursed for two or three years as the food of adult Eskimos is highly unsuitable for infants. This long nursing period is one of the reasons why Eskimo families are never large.

Parents are tender and affectionate and Eskimo children are never spanked or corrected harshly. The children in turn are very obedient and loving and speak the words "Atata" (father) and "Anana" (mother) almost with reverence. They are very friendly to strangers. Instead of running away like young Indian children they approach a stranger confidently and smilingly. Having never experienced cruelty or rebuff they are unable to imagine it.



THE SENSIBLE DRESS  
OF AN ESKIMO CHILD

As they get older they perform small services for the white man with intelligence and faithfulness. The complicated camera which took the pictures from which these illustrations are drawn, was for many months in charge of a little Eskimo boy who protected it from injury with the greatest care.

As soon as a little Eskimo can run about freely he is clothed in an exact miniature of his father's costume, from the large loose hood on his caribou skin coat to the little warm water-proof sealskin boots just like those made for grown-ups. In these comfortable and well ventilated clothes he can play in the snow as much as he likes without danger of getting cold.

The first toy of a little Eskimo is his tiny sled just like the old-fashioned wooden sleds of American

boys. For nine months in the year there is good sledding anywhere in the Arctic and Eskimo children play in the snow as other children play in sand or dirt. The first game naturally is harnessing the toddling puppies to the sled for a "mush" or journey over the ice around the igloo. Thus the child and dogs begin their lifelong companionship and dependence upon each other.

At the earliest possible moment an Eskimo father begins teaching his little son to use a bow and arrow. Sometimes he moulds little snow animals, bears and foxes, for the boy to aim at, and if the arrow shatters the toy the child and father are both well pleased. The use of the bow and arrow is not dying out in the North. For many purposes they are more practical



A LESSON  
IN MARKSMANSHIP

than the trader's guns and ammunition and learning to use the bow is an essential part of a young hunter's education. Revillon traders know instances where boys of eleven have caught several white foxes during the winter. At fifteen or sixteen an Eskimo boy is a good hunter and will go off by himself to get game.

## K Y A K   A N D   O M I A K

THE Eskimo has two types of boat, the kyak, which the man uses for hunting and journeys and the omiak, a large canoe which will carry a dozen or more people with all their belongings. The omiak is for old people, women and children and is used mostly for spring migrations to new hunting and fishing grounds.

The kyak is a remarkable boat in both structure and performance. It is cranky and unstable to the last degree and the Eskimo owner handles it cautiously, but in skilled hands it will stand heavy seas and it is very speedy. A single Eskimo in a kyak will make better time than a crew of four in a canoe. He can keep up with a motor launch for a distance of several thousand feet and can perform amazing stunts in the handling of his craft. For voyages in heavy seas two kyaks are sometimes lashed together like a catamaran, but if the ropes wear away and the boats part the paddlers are drowned. The Eskimo, though an excellent boatman, never learns to swim in the icy Arctic waters which are open for such a short portion of the year.

The frames of Eskimo boats are made of almost



IGLOO LIFE

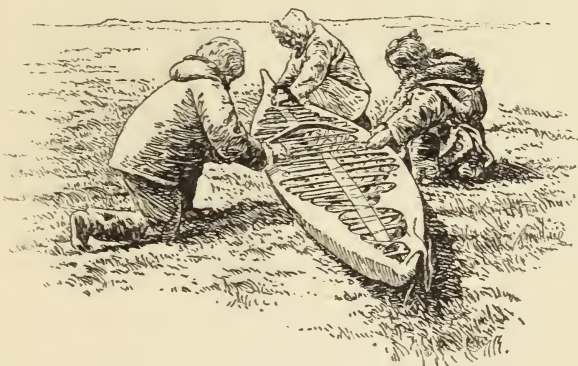


ESKIMO FAMILY IN OMIAK  
NOTE THE SEALSKIN BOOTS  
DRYING IN THE SUN



anything the builder can get. Driftwood is preferred but this is very scarce and is usually pieced out with bones and ribs of the larger animals. The sealskin cover joined by the Eskimo woman is laced securely over the hull and finished with a deck of skin leaving a circular opening for the paddler. This deck can be used for carrying fish or game or even a passenger who can remain sufficiently immovable to preserve the balance of the boat. Sometimes a passenger or freight is carried below decks, but the unstable character of the craft must always be taken into account. When traveling before the wind a small sail can be carried by a skilled boatman. Formerly these sails were made of grass matting or skins, but the Eskimo now buys a piece of canvas from the post trader.

When going hunting the Eskimo has his spear



PREPARING THE KYAK  
FOR LAUNCHING



THROWING A SPEAR  
FROM THE KYAK

lashed in a convenient position directly in front of him on the deck of the boat. On the after deck he carries a buoy made of inflated sealskin. This is attached to the head of the spear by a long seal-hide thong. When the spear is thrown the buoy goes overboard enabling the hunter to locate his prey and chase it down. If the game has not been killed he can at least recover the spear.

An exhibition of the excellent seamanship of a kyak paddler is afforded when supplies are unloaded on a scow which has to be towed to the pier. This requires team work of the highest type to prevent the loss of the goods or the capsizing of the kyak.



A KYAK  
IN THE ICE

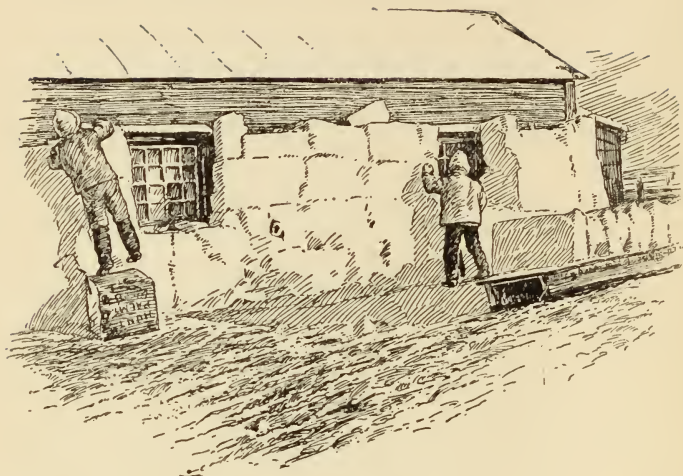


## F U R T R A D I N G I N T H E N O R T H

THE Arctic has only one industry—the taking of fur skins. The Eskimo hunter used to trap for his own food and clothing but he has now a market for his choicer peltry which enables him to get in exchange many things which add to his comfort and security such as firearms and ammunition for his own use, the poles and canvas for his summer home, thread and steel needles for his wife who used to sew with deer sinews and a bone needle, field glasses which enable him to see game a long way off, and the great steel snow knife which lasts so much better than his knife made of a walrus tusk though it does not cut the wet snow so well. The fur traders encourage the Eskimos to work more regularly for the sake of better food and the tools and implements which make his life easier.

Most important of all the post trader has brought to the North comparative freedom from famine which used to occur with tragic frequency. In the old days migration of game, a very severe winter, the loss of boats or dogs often meant starvation for large numbers of natives. When these disasters occur now the trading post has bacon, flour, beans

# IGLOO LIFE



PROTECTING THE  
TRADING POST FOR WINTER  
WITH LARGE SNOW BLOCKS

and other necessities and the Eskimo hunter's credit is good until the spring fishing comes or the game returns.

Revillon Frères maintain a chain of trading posts in the Eskimo country along the shores of James and Hudson Bay, where they collect marten, fox, bear and other skins of the region. Most of these posts are in touch with civilization only once a year when one of the Revillon schooner fleet brings in supplies and takes out the year's collection of peltry.

A trading post consists of five or six wooden buildings. As this country is practically barren the lumber must be brought from Montreal, a voyage of around three thousand miles. Buildings of a post are widely scattered to reduce danger from fire, and close by the main store and residence of the trader there will usually be a fire bell mounted in a tower. If fire breaks out this is sounded immediately to summon the employees of the post, including the Eskimos who are encamped nearby.

Eskimos bring in their skins on dog sledges, kyaks or in huge packs on their backs. The furs are wrapped in bales enclosed in a cover of deer skins strapped with raw moose hide. Skins shipped from the North have been well scraped and dried by the Eskimo and will keep indefinitely in this condition.

The Eskimos stay around the post for a considerable time selecting their supplies and enjoying a sociable holiday. They have many games interesting to the white man because they are so different from his own. One of them is a variation of



tug-of-war. A stout circle of deer hide is slipped over the heads of the contestants and each man exerts his full strength to pull the other backward. An Eskimo boxing match is still more curious. The boxers pound away at each others' forearms with no attempt at parrying the blows and the man who can stand the pounding longest wins the match.

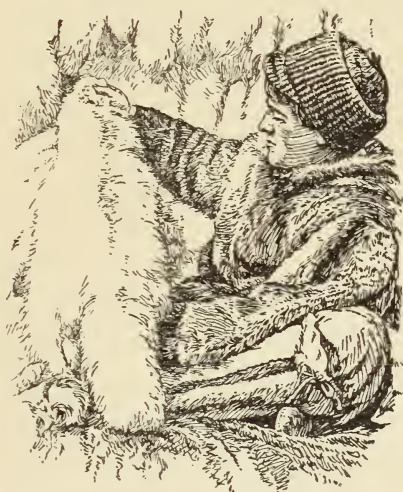
There are usually a considerable number of Eskimos encamped around a post in tents or igloos, according to the season. The post trader employs them for any work he may have under way and finds them intelligent and skilful at most of their tasks. At one of the posts there is a substantial stone pier which required several summers to build as every stone had to be carried and placed by hand. There are not, of course, even the simplest facilities for construction work in the North.

White men accustomed to the Arctic do not dread the long winters as they have borrowed from the Eskimo many of his devices which make the cold bearable. When the first snows come the trader has a shelter of snow blocks built entirely over the post, protecting it from the winds just as the igloo is protected. The entrance is through a snow tunnel built to the door in such a way that the wind cannot enter. The trading post becomes the center of its own little world locked away in the wilderness. The schooner has left coal, oil, food and other comforts. There is good fishing through the ice and usually excellent hunting if the trader has time for it.

Above all, there is interesting and responsible

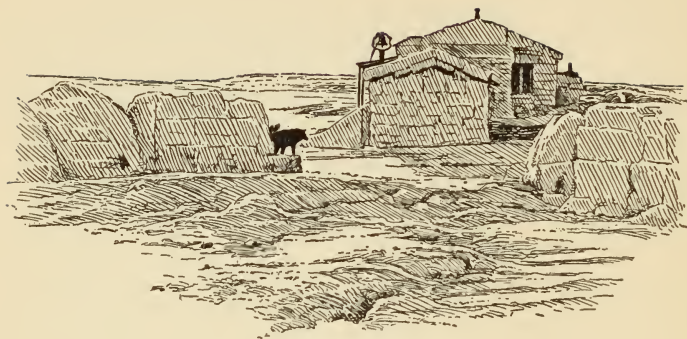


work to be done. The trader must organize his own little world and make it as productive and prosperous as he can. He must be a good judge of furs and buy judiciously. The welfare of his dependents and the interests of his employees are always in his hands. A post trader must needs be a man of energy and resource and a real leader and executive. The freedom of the life attracts many such men of ability, and few who become established in the work ever leave it permanently. Once in three years a post trader has a furlough when he gets in touch with civilization and can make a fresh comparison of the advantages of life in the North and elsewhere.



A POST TRADER  
VALUING A SKIN

I G L O O   L I F E



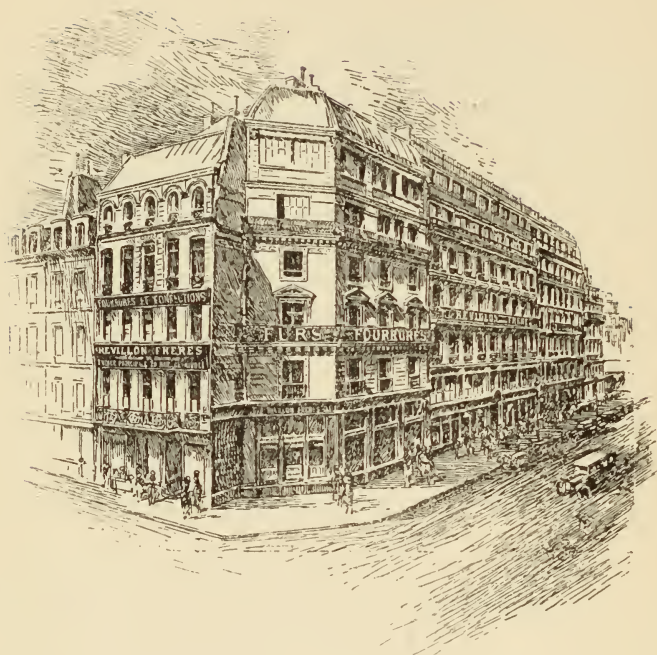
MAIN BUILDING OF A POST ON JAMES'S BAY  
NOTE FIRE BELL TO SUMMON POST SERVANTS

## R E V I L L O N H I S T O R Y I N O U T L I N E

REVILLON was first used as a name during the French Revolution, when Count Louis Victor d'Apresval refused to emigrate and retired instead to an estate at Boissy Saint Leger, near Paris. He took the name of Revillon, from a small brook which ran through his land. He had the distinction of seeing his own land and property auctioned off by the Revolutionary Tribunal on the Place de la Revolution.

He brought up a large family of eleven sons and one daughter, to whom he added a thirteenth adopted child. His sons were directed toward commerce and industry. One of them, Louis Victor Junior, gifted with remarkable intelligence and energy, entered a firm of peltry dealers, where he made his apprenticeship. Early in the last century, he married Mlle. Josephine Jancke, the daughter of a furrier, whose long established business succeeded the firm of Givelet, which was founded in 1723.

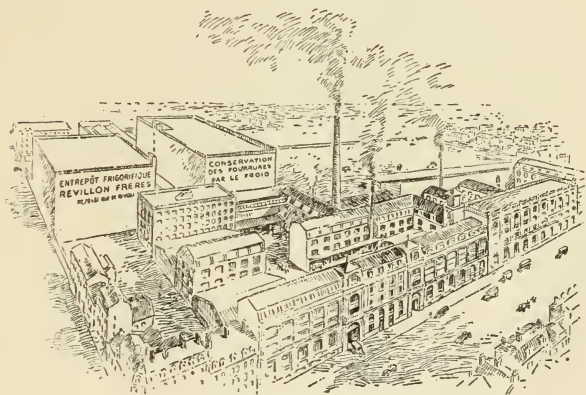
Messrs. Theodore senior, Albert senior, Leon and Anatole Revillon were left the business at the death of their father, in 1873. Under their leadership, Revillon Frères quickly increased, and started spread-



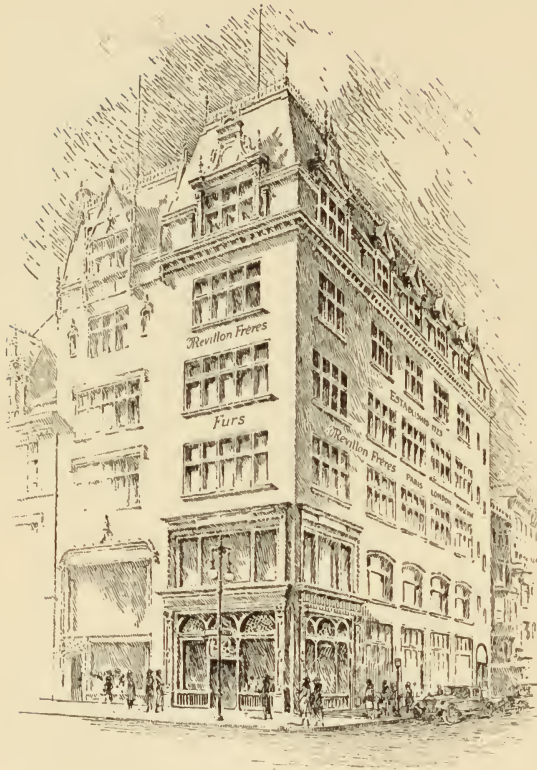
81 RUE DE RIVOLI AND ADJOINING  
BUILDINGS OCCUPIED BY  
REVILLON FRÈRES IN PARIS

ing its present network of branches in both hemispheres.

Victor Revillon, son of Mr. Theodore Revillon Senior, and today President of the Company, is the principal sponsor of the worldwide expansion of the House. At his instigation trading posts and agencies throughout the world were added to the three main Houses of Paris, London and New York, which had been developed by the preceding generations. J. M. Revillon, son of Leon Revillon, is Vice-President of the Company, and supervises the management of the American and Canadian Houses.



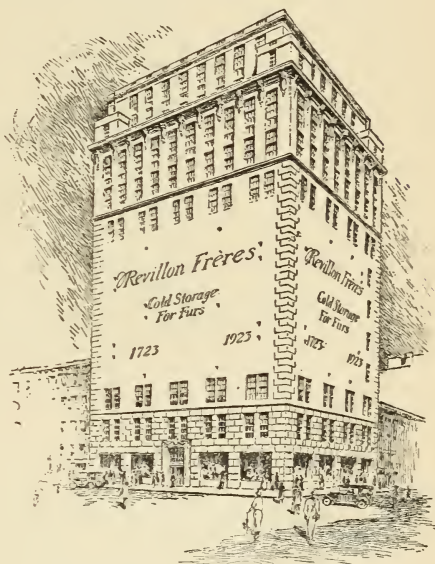
MANUFACTURING AND COLD STORAGE BUILDINGS  
RUE DE LA FEDERATION  
PARIS



THE REVILLON FRÈRES RETAIL STORE  
FIFTH AVENUE AT 53RD STREET  
NEW YORK



The first Revillon Frères establishment in New York was opened in 1890 in Middle Broadway. The business developed so rapidly that a building in West 28th Street was soon erected to house it. When retail trade moved up to 34th Street, the large building opposite the Waldorf was erected to contain both Wholesale and Retail Departments, but the fine shopping district continued to move further north and the present building at 670 Fifth Avenue was secured. This is used for Retail business alone, the Wholesale and Retail Departments occupying separate buildings further downtown. There is now under construction a large ten story building corner of Eighth Avenue and 30th Street. Four floors will be devoted to Cold Storage lofts of the most modern type. The other floors will be used for offices for the various departments of the firm and as a warehouse for their valuable stock of dressed skins.

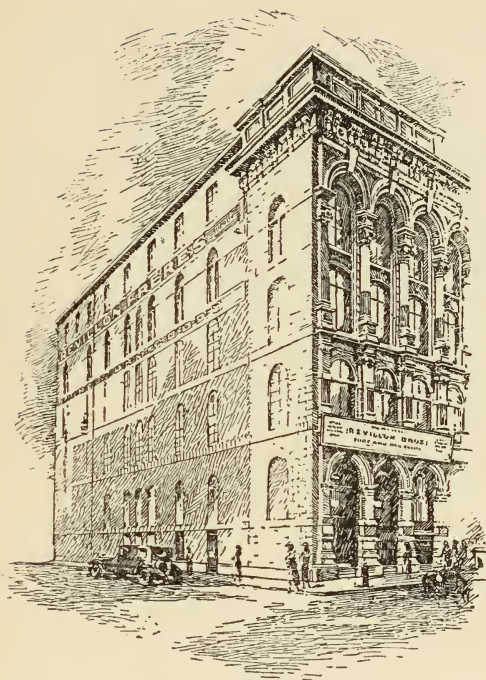


COLD STORAGE BUILDING  
NOW UNDER CONSTRUCTION  
EIGHTH AVENUE AT 30TH STREET  
NEW YORK



The London Branch was opened by M. Leon Revillon, in 1869. Until that time furs were made mostly into muffs and collars and more rarely into outer garments intended only for warmth. M. Leon Revillon developed in London the art of making fur garments in the same

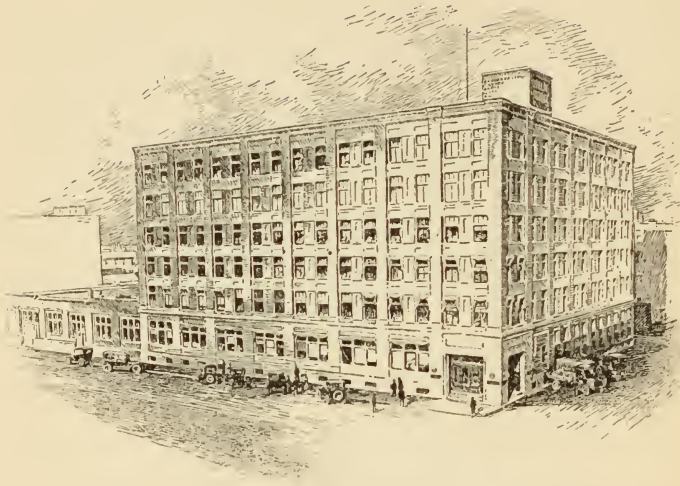




REVILLON FRÈRES  
HEADQUARTERS  
IN MONTREAL

graceful and becoming styles as garments of wool or cloth.

Until about 1900 Revillon Frères bought furs in the great markets of London, Leipsic and Moscow, but M. Victor Revillon, present head of the Company decided that finer skins might be obtained by dealing directly with the trappers in those regions where the



THE LARGE DISTRIBUTING  
WAREHOUSE AT EDMONTON

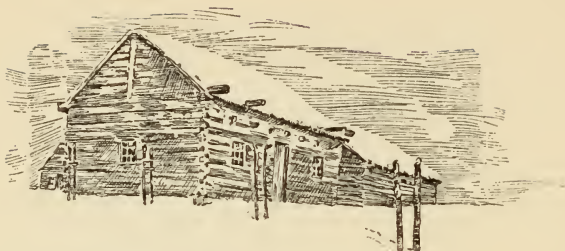
best furs are produced. One by one he built up chains of trading posts in Western Canada, in the Hudson Bay District and in Northern Siberia. A Revillon purchasing station was also established at Bokhara for the collection of Persians and Broadtail.

Fur trading is still much the same romantic business it was when beaver skins were recognized "money" in lower Manhattan, and the search for peltry and the search for gold were the two great



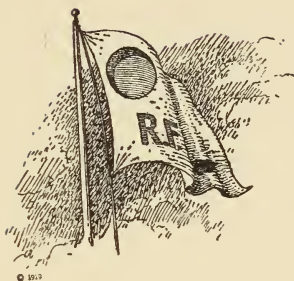
THE SIBERIAN HEADQUARTERS  
OF REVILLON FRÈRES AT KRASNOYARSK

aims of explorers and pioneers. Revillon posts are established far in the wilderness where there are no transportation routes, so the company must operate their own steamship, their own schooners on Hudson Bay, a fleet of river flat boats with power boats to tow them, canoes, dog sleds, and every other means by which goods may be taken into uninhabited regions and furs brought out.



A TYPICAL TRADING POST IN  
NORTHERN CANADA

The network of houses and branches covering the world's chief cities, the series of trading posts, the transportation systems are all part of the organized effort to secure the finest fur skins which the world affords, and to handle them in such a way that Revillon patrons may feel assured that no better and finer furs than their own can be procured anywhere.



THE REVILLON FRÈRES FLAG WHICH  
FLIES ON ALL THE COMPANY'S  
TRADING STATIONS THROUGHOUT  
THE ENTIRE NORTH





